

Topsfield Planning Board

February 2, 2010

Chairman Winship called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Board members present were Robert Winship, Janice Ablon, Gregor Smith, Ian deBuy Wenniger and Jonathan Young. Roberta Knight, Community Development Coordinator was also present.

Visitors: Selectmen Martha Morrison and Dick Gandt.

Minutes:

Clerk Janice Ablon made the motion to approve the minutes of January 19, 2010 as written; seconded by Member Gregor Smith; so voted 3-0. Members Jonathan Young and Ian deBuy Wenniger abstained since neither attended the meeting.

Member Gregor Smith made the motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2010 as corrected; seconded by Clerk Janice Ablon; so voted 3-0. Members Jonathan Young and Ian deBuy Wenniger abstained since neither attended the meeting.

Low Impact Development Guidelines: After a short review of the final draft document, Member Gregor Smith made the motion to adopt the Low Impact Development Guidelines as amended; seconded by Member Ian deBuy Wenniger; so voted 5-0.

Selectman Morrison volunteered to locate the two plates referenced in the Guidelines.

Public Hearing Schedule: The Board agreed to the proposed schedule developed by Ms. Knight. The public hearing on the 2010 zoning amendments will be on Tuesday, March 16th at 8:00PM.

Review of 2010 Zoning Amendment Articles Draft No. 1A: The Board members reviewed Draft 1A and discussed the various warrant articles as follows:

Non-criminal Disposition: The members discussion centered on whether the insertion of language relative to the non-criminal disposition was necessary or could alternately just be placed in the respective rules & regulations. The Soil Removal By-law has no regulations so language must be inserted within the by-law. The Scenic Road and Stormwater Management & Erosion Control By-laws have regulations citing fines but do not have any language specifically citing M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 21D Non-criminal Disposition within the by-laws.

Wood Boilers (Outdoors): The Board discussed the issue of prohibiting outside wood boilers. Chairman Winship noted that Inspector of Buildings Glenn Clohecy

had informed him the position of the State's Chief Building Inspector is to simply prohibit the boilers rather than develop extensive regulations. The members then discussed the definition as defined by the State. The Board revised the definition to read: "Wood boilers are self-contained wood fired hot water boilers that are intended to heat a dwelling or other structure located external to said dwelling or structure".

Wind Energy Conversion Systems: The Board reviewed the draft by-law for small residential systems written by Member Jonathan Young as the replacement for the existing WECS by-law which is over twenty years old and requires updating. The intent of the revised by-laws is to provide further protections relative to the latest technology for small scale systems. Mr. Young will work on a revised draft. In addition, the members discussed the warrant articles concerning "utility conversion systems" relative to an overlay zone at the DPW site.

Selectman Morrison noted that there has been no public input nor has there been any dissemination of information to the public by the Renewable Energy Committee or the Planning Board. Mr. Winship who has put forth the list of articles based on the Renewable Energy Committee's agenda is a member of both committees agreed with Ms. Morrison's statement. Ms. Morrison further noted that the Renewable Energy Committee may be moving too quickly in requesting revisions to the Zoning By-law in order to implement its agenda to create a revenue stream for the Town under the Green Communities guidelines by the permitting of utility sized systems. A decision as to whether to move forward with the articles related to the "utility scale wind energy conversion systems" will be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

For the record, wind conversion systems fall under the special permitting authority of the Planning Board, and the proposed agenda would require revisions to various sections of the Zoning By-law. The Planning Board must make recommendations and hold a public hearing regarding these revisions.

Installation of Solar Equipment: The Board was in agreement that the installation of solar equipment on the roofs of Town buildings as proposed by the Renewable Energy Committee was not an issue, and could be revenue generating.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta M. Knight
Community Development Coordinator